11 Parent-Child Interactions in Hawaii: Learning Social and Psychological Preferences

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As Drs. Brislin, Casas, and McCaulley noted at the beginning of this conference, cultural norms may encourage one set of cognitive and social preferences while discouraging or peripheralizing others. If a person's preferences match the cultural preferences, then it may be easier for that person to adapt, succeed, and see the beauty of this style in that cultural context. On the other hand, if the person's preferences do not match the cultural styles, then the person may experience difficulties, and self-doubt and may need to develop less preferred skills to succeed. McCaulley's view of the relationship between preferences and cultural upbringing, is that "people need to bloom in the ground in which they are planted." (See chapter 3 in this volume.)

Adult members of cultural groups actively and indirectly encourage initiate members, such as children, to develop particular styles. Parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, elder siblings, masters in an apprenticeship system, and others, are major socializers who model, teach, and set up situations which encourage particular ways of perceiving and acting upon reality. I believe that culture, or the predominant social and behavioral patterns in a culture, and the meanings attached to these, influences the development of particular cognitive styles by giving children moment to moment demonstrations of how a particular style works and how it produces satisfying experiences in *that* cultural context. I want to show how this happens by describing everyday interactions which occur between parents and children when they go to the beach in Hawaii.

I studied how 150 Japanese-American, Caucasian-American, and Hawaiian-American parents interacted with their young children at the beach. The purpose was to see whether cultural background influences child-rearing practices in these everyday interactions, and in turn, to see whether child-rearing practices affect the kinds of messages children receive about how to perceive and deal with the world. I chose the beach as a public setting which is relatively free of social constraints and is very familiar to people in the groups studied. Families voluntarily choose to go to the beach and do so frequently in Hawaii.

I found that although parents in Hawaii are, foremost, Americans, cultural background does influence child rearing. Differences were noted in the social contexts of going to the beach, i.e., in terms of the size and composition of the family groups going to the beach, and in terms of how parents spent their time and interacted with their children there. I discuss these behavioral differences in terms of cultural messages conveyed to children and the particular social and psychological styles supported by these messages.

Due to time constraints, I will present only the Caucasian-American/Japanese-American comparison and report only on the individuation-affiliation processes noted in these groups.

BACKGROUND

Hawaii is a multi-cultural society. In the 1980 census, 25% of the respondents designated themselves as Japanese-American, 33% as Caucasian, and 12% as Hawaiian. (Other groups are Filipinos, 14%; Chinese, 6%; Koreans, 2%; other Pacific Islanders, and South-East Asians).

People from different cultural groups live, work, go to school, and spend leisure time together or in close proximity. Compared to other regions of the United States, there is relatively little ethnic segregation in Hawaii in terms of patterns of residence, work, and use of leisure space.

Japanese laborers first came to Hawaii in large numbers in the late 1800's. The Caucasian presence has been felt since the arrival of the missionaries in the early 1800's. The proportion of the population which is ethnically Hawaiian has decreased precipitously since the arrival of the missionaries—in part due to the influx of other peoples, in part due to the decimation of the Hawaiian group due to the introduction of foreign diseases.

Parents in Hawaii are, foremost, Americans—regardless of cultural background. Also, cultural groups in Hawaii have lived in close proximity for many generations, and people claim the emergence of a "local" culture which combines elements of many groups and supersedes the national characteristics of any one. Nonetheless, as this report indicates, cultural background continues to affect basic orientations toward life, parenting practices, and the socialization messages conveyed to children.

Much work has been done comparing mainland American and national Japanese parents (see references). Ethnographic studies have also described Hawaiian home life and parent-child relationships and have related these to patterns in other Polynesian cultures and to middle-class, mainland American patterns.

Several factors considered in these studies are relevant to this investigation. In particular, cultural differences have been noted in:
- the view of the parenting role;
- social and economic contexts of parenting;
- the range of people socializing the child;
- emphasis on independence vs. dependence;
- emphasis on separateness vs. social involvement;
- preferred modes of communication; and,
- preferred learning styles.

Middle-class, mainland Caucasian-American parents are characterized as fostering: independence, individuation from the family and social groups, individual goal-setting and achievement, self-reliance, anti-traditionalism, anti-authoritarianism, learning by experimenting, innovating and risk-taking, persistence in meeting individual goals, and geographical mobility, which is based on a preference for freedom from social obligations and the quest for self-fulfillment.

In psychological type research (Casas, 1993; Brislin, 1993), middle-class American males are characterized as "extraverted thinking with sensing" people who "use their thinking to run as much of the world as may be theirs to run. They like to organize projects and then act to get things done. Reliance on thinking makes them logical,

analytical, objectively critical, and not likely to be convinced by anything but reasoning. They tend to focus on the job, not the people behind the job… They have little patience with confusion or inefficiency… They think conduct should be ruled by logic, and govern their own behavior accordingly. They live by a definite set of rules that embody their basic judgments about the world… They are more interested in seeing present realities than future possibilities. This makes them matter-of-fact, practical, realistic and concerned with the here-and-now… They like jobs where the results of their work are immediate, visible, and tangible" (Myers, 1991, p. 10).

Middle-class Japanese parents, on the other hand, are characterized as fostering: social interdependence, sensitivity toward others, a deep appreciation for social belonging, coordination of individual goals with family and group needs, respect for authority and tradition, learning by watching and practicing, persistence in meeting group-valued goals, and geographical stability based on a preference for enduring ties and interconnectedness.

In psychological type research, middle-class Japanese males are characterized as INFP types, who "have a great deal of warmth, but may not show it until they know a person well... They are very faithful to duties and obligations related to ideas or people they care about. They take a very personal approach to life, judging everything by their inner ideals and personal values. They stick to their ideals with passionate conviction. Although their inner loyalties and ideals govern their lives, they find these hard to talk about. Their deepest feelings are seldom expressed; their inner tenderness is masked by a quiet reserve. In everyday matters they are tolerant, open-minded, understanding, flexible, and adaptable. But if their inner loyalties are threatened, they will not give an inch...they have little wish to impress or dominate. The people they prize the most are those who take the time to understand their values and the goals they are working toward" (Myers, 1991, p. 17).

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

From this review of cultural values, social norms, and parenting practices, I expected parents in the three groups to have different views of what they "should" be doing as parents. I also expected them to convey different cultural messages to their children through their actions. These messages would be about the importance of individuation vs. affiliation and about preferred modes of goal-setting, achievement, learning, and communication.

I expected Japanese-American parents to teach their children to trust others to care for their needs, to entertain them, to provide a pleasing setting, and to "always be there for them." I expected Japanese-American parents to attend primarily to their children and only secondarily to their personal interests and to the marital relationship. I expected them to remain close to their children, playing with and caring for them. I thought they would indulge children and foster dependence by quickly meeting children's needs and by avoiding and deflecting parent-child conflict. I thought they would model and encourage socially-proper behavior—cleanliness and politeness—and social sensitivity. I expected them to prefer and encourage nonverbal modes of communication and a learning style based on controlled exploration, imitation, and practice. I expected them to protect children from discomforts which might arise from wide-ranging exploration and to curb this kind of exploration.

I expected Caucasian-American parents to teach their children to be independent from others. I expected them to encourage children to entertain themselves, care for

their own needs, and learn through wide-ranging exploration, innovation, risk-taking, and making occasional mistakes rather than from imitation alone. I expected Caucasian-American parents to attend to their own personal interests as well as to their children's interests—not just because they were interested in their own goals but in an effort to encourage self-reliance. I expected them to allow wide-ranging exploration which might result in minor discomfort, while protecting children from major dangers. I expected them to attend less to social form and appearance—to care less about pleasing food preparation, cleanliness and politeness than the Japanese-American parents. I expected them to communicate mainly in the verbal mode and to tolerate confrontations and power struggles as normal dynamics which arise when strong willed individuals are together.

From the ethnographic literature on Hawaiian families I expected Hawaiian-Americans to come to the beach in large social groups. I expected parents to teach their children that the "child world" and "adult world" are separate domains. I expected them to teach children to be autonomous in the peer domain, but compliant and respectful in the adult realm. I expected Hawaiian parents to spend much time socializing and solidifying their ties with adult relatives and friends, rather than attending exclusively to their children. I expected Hawaiian children, also, to prefer the peer domain, and to rarely initiate contacts with the adults. I expected parents to encourage self-reliance and reliance on older siblings. I expected them to allow wide-ranging exploration as long as it does not endanger the child or disrupt the social group. I expected Hawaiian-American parents, like their Caucasian counterparts to be less concerned with social appearances and propriety.

METHODOLOGY

Sample. Students in my parenting courses and I systematically observed 91 families on O'ahu beaches. We collected stream-of-behavior observations for 150 parents:

      55 Caucasian-American;
      49 Japanese-American; and,
      46 Hawaiian-American parents.

Each family included at least one young child (up to 5 years of age).

Observations. We recorded contextual information and described parents' actions toward their children, for a continuous series of 3-minute periods. They observed each family for 20-45 minutes.

Coding. I then made lists of all parent activities noted in the records. I derived coding categories from the lists by grouping conceptually similar activities together into categories.

In this way, I derived coding categories from the data, rather than generating them a priori. I believe this method preserves the relationship between individual behaviors and the contexts in which they are performed, and increases the validity of the findings.

Parents engaged in the following eight major activities in these observations. The first five reflect child-centered behavior. The last three reflect parent-centered behavior.

1. Parents play actively with their children, e.g., they help them build structures in the sand, play ball, and swing them around in the water.

2. They follow their children around and comment on their actions, e.g., they sit next to them and talk about their sand structures, or stand near them as they paddle around in the water.

3. They converse with children in positive or neutral ways, sharing information and opinions, often while eating with the children.

4. They take care of children's needs: they apply suntan lotion, inflate water wings, remove sand from eyes, feed, comfort, and dress children.

5. They prepare food and arrange the family's space and belongings. They carry belongings, spread mats, set up chairs, distribute and fix toys, make sandwiches, and gather items as they leave.

6. They talk with children in negative ways, encouraging children to follow parents' plans or agenda: scolding, commanding or punishing.

7. They engage in individual activities such as sunbathing, reading, doing cross-word puzzles, sleeping, swimming, and fishing alone. During these activities they interact infrequently with their children.
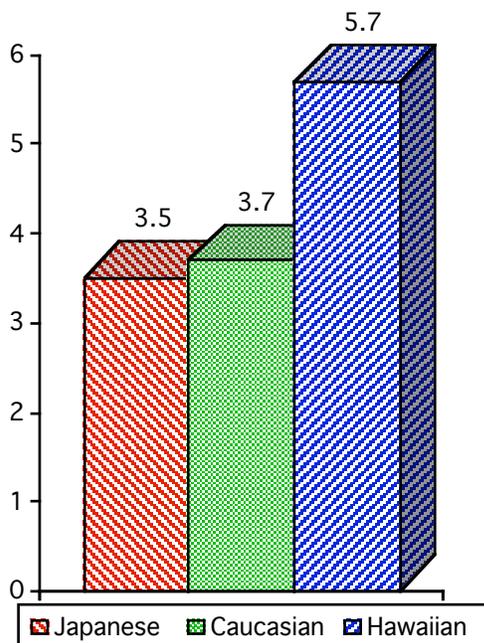
8. They talk to each other and to other adults, playing cards, gossiping, joking, and telling stories. During these activities, they interact infrequently with their children.

Coders applied this system to code each three-minute segment in the behavior records for the parent's major activity.

RESULTS

Family size and composition. Children in the different cultural groups find themselves in quite different social contexts at the beach. Hawaiian family groups at the beach are the largest, averaging 5.7 members. The Japanese and Caucasian family groups are about the same with 3.5 and 3.7 members, respectively. (See Figure 11.1.) Over half the Hawaiian families have more than five members. This is true for only 14% of the Caucasian and Japanese families. (See Figure 11.2.) In this context, Hawaiian children and adults have a wide range of peers to interact with and children tend to interact with other children, adults with adults. In contrast, parent-child interactions predominated in the Japanese-American and Caucasian-American families. People, of course, do not accidentally come to the beach in one sized group rather than another—they choose the kind of group they want. This choice often reflects their beliefs about important kinds of interactions (e.g., the importance of adult-child vs. peer relations).

Figure 11.1
Average Size of Family Groups

Figure 11.2
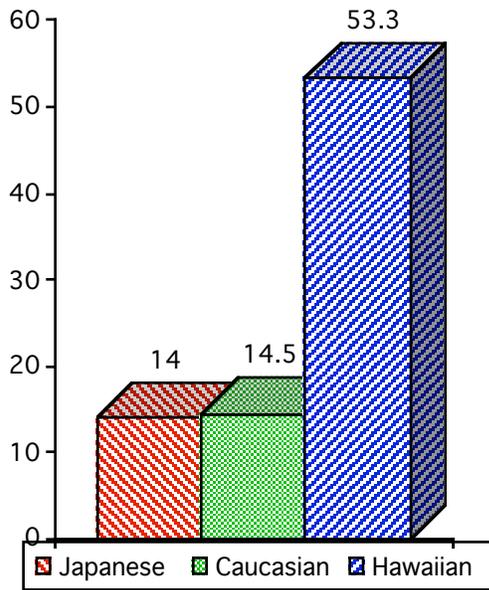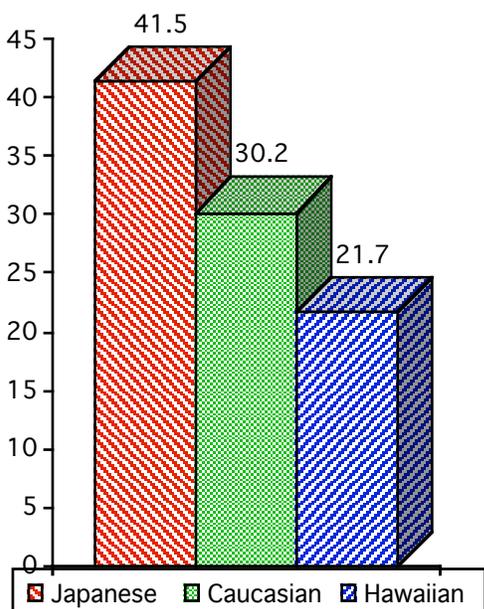Percentage of Family Groups with
5 or More Members

Parent activities. Parents in the three groups differ in terms of how they spend their time. (See Table 11.1.) Japanese-American parents focus on their children. They spend 84% of their time either: playing with their children (28.7% of the segments); following them around and commenting on their activities (10.9%); taking care of their needs (20.2%); or preparing food or the setting for them (10.2%). They spend little time in individual activities such as sun-bathing (14.5%) and very little time talking to each other (2.8%).

Japanese-American parents actively play, converse, and stay near their children more than do the Caucasian and Hawaiian parents. (See Figure 11.3.) They also spend more time taking care of the children and preparing food and the setting for them. (See Figure 11.4.)

Caucasian-American parents focus on themselves and each other at the beach, encouraging their children to entertain themselves. They spend 28.4% of their time in solitary activities, such as reading, sunbathing or swimming alone. (See Figure 11.5.) They talk to each other and to adult friends another 8.6% of the time.

Caucasian parents engage in individual activities more than Hawaiian or Japanese parents do. (See Figure 11.5.) They actively

Figure 11.3
Percentage of Time Parents are Actively
Engaged with Child(ren)

Table 11.1
Activities for Japanese-, Caucasian-, and Hawaiian-American Parents

	Plays with	Stays nearby	Converses with	Cares for	Prepares for	Commands	Own activity	Adult talk
J-A	28.70	10.90	1.90	20.20	10.20	10.90	14.50	2.80
C-A	18.60	8.58	3.06	14.10	3.68	14.92	28.42	8.58
H-A	10.32	5.43	5.97	8.42	4.89	13.58	23.36	27.89

Figure 11.4
Percentage of Time Parents Care for
Children or Prepare Food or
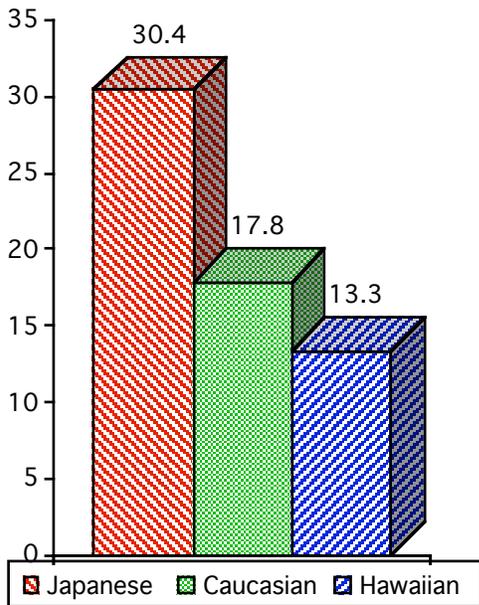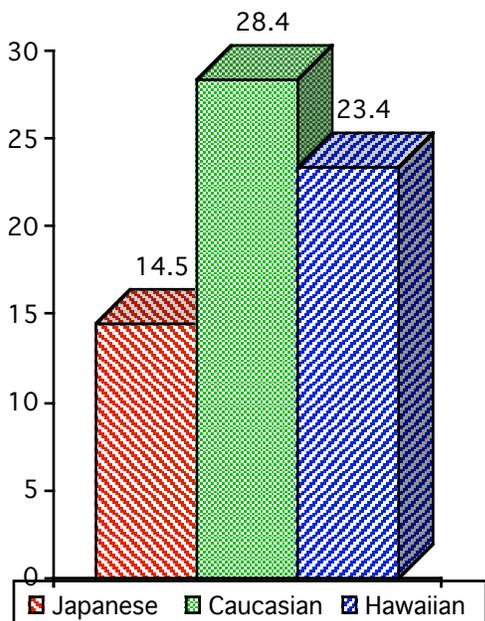Space for Them

Figure 11.5
Percentage of Time Parents
Engage in Individual Activities

play, converse, and stay near their children less than Japanese parents do, but more than Hawaiian parents do. (See Figure 11.3.)

Hawaiian-American parents engage in extensive peer interaction at the beach. They spend half their time either talking to adults (27.8%) or doing individual activities such as fishing nearby (23.3%). (See Figure 11.6.) They actively play and stay near their children less than do parents in the other two groups. They also take care of children's needs and preparefood and space for them less than do the other parents. (See Figures 11.3 and 11.4.)

Summary

Japanese-American parents seem to go to the beach to be with their children. They spend most of the time playing and caring for them, and little time in solitary or social activities. Japanese-American parents carefully monitor children and meet their needs quickly. Children are not encouraged to entertain or take care of themselves.

Caucasian-American parents seem to go to the beach to relax as individuals. They spend most of the time in solitary activities or talking to other adults. They frequently remind children to entertain and take care of themselves.

Hawaiian-American parents seem to go to the beach to socialize with other adults. They go to the beach in larger groups, which include adult relatives and friends. Hawaiian children mainly play with siblings and cousins at the beach and do not seek extensive contact with adults. Only occasionally do adults explicitly encourage children to play among themselves. However, parents seem to derive pleasure from watching their children play and making occasional playful, verbal contact.

DISCUSSION

The observed differences may be viewed in terms of cultural differences in many aspects of parenting. The behavioral differences reflect differences in moment-to-moment messages sent to children about preferred cognitive,

communicative, and behavioral styles.

Views of the parental role. Japanese-American parents attend almost solely to their children; the Caucasian parents attend to individual interest as well, and the Hawaiian parents attend to their adult networks at the beach. What might explain these differences?

Parents in these three groups seem to view the parenting role differently: in terms of how important it is for self-definition, how critical it is as a social function, and in terms of how to convey values to children.

Parenting for Japanese-Americans. Although parenting is a major adult role in all three groups, motherhood is crucial for the definition of women as adults in Japan and is highly valued and respected as a crucial social function. (Lebra, 1985; Imamura, 1987). The model mother in Japan places the child's needs and development above all other interests (Lebra, 1976, 1985). She constantly sacrifices self-interest for the child's good. (See chapter 12 in this volume.)

The cultural ideal for human relationships in Japan is the intimate mother-child bond. The kind of indulgence and interdependence which occurs in the mother-child relationship is striven for in other relationships.

Figure 11.6
Percentage of Time Parents
Converse with Adults

Japanese mothers monitor and indulge children so thoroughly that they sometimes perceive and meet children's needs before the children are even aware of them (Lebra, 1976). The Japanese-American parents in this study constantly monitor, play with, and care for their children.
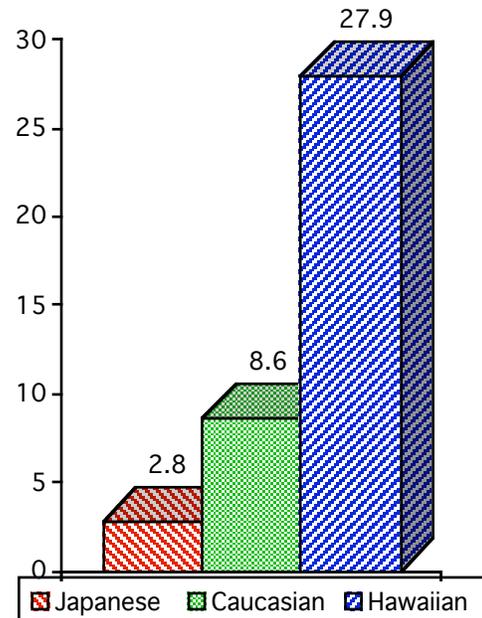
In Japan, motherhood is seen as the most valued female role. Women are not expected nor encouraged to develop other roles, such as the role of a career woman (Lebra, 1985, Imamura, 1987). Complete attention to the parenting role is preferred.

Parents believe that concerned parenting will produce loyal children who will care for them during old age (Ogawa, 1975; Murayama, 1975). People setting social, economic, and government policies in Japan seem to believe that concerned parenting will produce model citizens who will support an orderly, productive, and aesthetically pleasing society.

Effective parenting is seen as instilling in the child a sense of belonging to a family and group, and a desire to gear individual goals to group needs. Parents prepare children for a life-time of orderly interaction with a small group of familiar others.

Although most Japanese-American mothers in Hawaii work outside the home (72% in 1990, *The bottom line: A compilation of data on children and youth issues*), this work is often viewed as secondary to raising children. Time with the family takes precedence over time on the job. Hence, women gravitate toward part-time jobs and work which can be completed at the workplace during work hours. If work and family demands conflict, Japanese-American women tend to attend to the family first (Izutsu, Furkawa, & Hayashida, 1987).

In the beach observations, Japanese-American mothers attend to their children completely and unambivalently. In contrast to Caucasian-American mothers, they do not seem preoccupied with thoughts about work. For example, they do not talk about work problems or career issues.

Caucasian-American parents. Parenting is an extremely important component in the definition of adulthood for Caucasian-Americans. It is counterbalanced, however, by other valorized roles and by a culturally-prescribed need to successfully separate from one's child (Howard, 1974; Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Galinsky, 1987; Brooks 1991). Parents have been raised to seek individual self-fulfillment, either through careers or by perfecting nonwork talents (Bellah et al., 1985; Howard, 1974).

Some Caucasian-American mothers who devote themselves completely to raising children experience lowered self-esteem (Mischel & Fuhr, 1988; Galinsky 1987; Brooks 1991). Some seek self-fulfillment through parenting and become perfectionistic in this endeavor. Children become symbols of self-success and problems arise when children, who are socialized to value individualism by other agents, want lives away from their mothers' search for self-esteem (Galinsky, 1987).

Many women who try to balance demanding careers with raising children suffer role conflict, exhaustion, and recurrent self-doubt about their choices (Mischel & Fuhr, 1988; Strober, 1988). Caucasian-American mothers experience difficulty trying to separate the work and home domains of their lives. They report being preoccupied with work while attending to their children and with thoughts of their children while trying to work (Galinsky, 1987; Strober, 1988). As a result, the quality of their attention to children is not as high as for Japanese-American mothers, who seem to experience less role conflict.

These tendencies are observed in the beach study. Caucasian-American mothers seem harried and unable to relax. They discuss work problems and list work they need to do. One mother complained that she needed some time alone, to organize herself.

Hawaiian-American parents. Parenting is a crucial role for self-definition in the Hawaiian culture (Howard, 1974; Boggs, 1985; D'Amato, 1986). The role entails nurturing the child, integrating the child into the family network and preparing the child for a life-time of intense social contact (D'Amato, 1986; Boggs, 1985). Nurturing and training, however, are jobs for the whole network. The child is seen as belonging to the family as much as to the biological parents (D'Amato, 1986). Parents share tasks with multiple caregivers and socializers.

Different socializers play different roles in nurturing and training the child. Grandparents focus on the development of the child's self-esteem, special talents, verbal and abstract reasoning skills (Boggs, 1985). Parents focus on teaching children respect for authority and sensitivity to group goals (D'Amato, 1986). Elder siblings and peers teach everyday skills and loyalty to the sibling and peer group. They also toughen the child for a life-time of extensive, often conflicting, social contact (D'Amato, 1986).

Hawaiian adult self-definition also involves skills in other roles. Skillful adults show compassion for a range of others in their networks, not just for children. Adults are expected to run well-functioning households in which the needs of all are met. They are also expected to establish and maintain a wide network of relationships. The adult role does not focus primarily on caring for children. In the beach observations, Hawaiian parents are observed fulfilling these multiple roles, maintaining ties with a wide range of others, and enabling many others to care for and train their children.

Emphasis on independence vs. dependence

Japanese-American parents. Depending on indulgent others is a highly valued process in Japan, not something to be avoided as it is in the United States (Doi, 1986; Lebra, 1976). Care-giving practices during infancy emphasize unity between mothers and babies, rather than separateness. Mothers prolong breast feeding, sleep with their infants, bathe with them, and carry them for long periods (Caudill & Weinstein, 1969). They communicate through touch and nonverbal gestures, and try to soothe infants into a continuous state of calm, rather than stimulate them to be active or exploratory. Mothers spend most of their time with the infant, monitoring her every move. They rarely leave infants with baby-sitters, and they postpone returning to work as long as possible (Lebra, 1976).

Japanese mothers believe they know their infants' needs as well as or better than the infants themselves and see their role as anticipating and meeting these needs. In this way they do not wait for the infant to express needs, but feed them and put them down to sleep when the mothers anticipate they might be hungry or sleepy (Lebra, 1976). They do not expect babies to learn to formulate and express their individual wishes.

Mothers indulge infant wants, doing what they can to relieve the baby's frustration. They do not expect babies to develop techniques to calm themselves or entertain themselves. They lie down next to a baby and pat, sing to, and comfort the baby until he goes to sleep. Similarly, they immediately feed or give fussy babies the objects they want. According to Lebra (1976), these parents do not believe that babies need to learn to deal with frustration. Similarly, they entertain a bored baby as soon as possible. They do not believe that babies need to learn to entertain themselves. Japanese babies are not being trained for a life of self-reliance, aloneness, independent processing, and the need to clearly express individual motives and goals to unresponsive others—as are American babies. Instead, Japanese parents model the kind of social sensitivity and responsiveness they hope their children will acquire.

During the toddler period, Japanese parents avoid power confrontations and clashes of will in order to preserve close emotional ties between the parent and child. They distract children from destructive or dangerous activities by providing new, equally attractive activities (Lebra, 1976; Miyake et al., 1986). When distraction does not work, they indulge the child's wishes, often sacrificing their own interests at those times. Effective distraction, however, requires constant attention to the child, intimate knowledge of the child's preferences and interests, and resourcefulness in inventing alternative activities which will be equally attractive to the child. Parents need to spend much time with the child to develop these skills. During this period, other life goals and activities, including maintaining the husband-wife relationship, are set aside.

These tendencies for Japanese-American parents to attend exclusively to children and to interact infrequently with each other are observed in the beach records.

Caucasian-American parents. From early infancy, Caucasian-American parents emphasize the separateness of mother and child and nudge babies to develop their own self-structuring techniques (Richman et al., 1988). Breast-feeding is not prolonged, and babies sleep and are bathed separately. Caucasian-American babies spend much time off the mother's body in their own cribs, playpens, infant seats, walkers, and bouncers. Mothers encourage them to entertain themselves for short periods—leaving them alone with toys. Parents encourage infants to calm themselves when upset and to develop skills for falling asleep alone in a darkened room (Richman, Miller, & Soloman, 1988; Lebra, 1976; Brooks, 1991). Parents leave babies with baby-sitters, and mothers feel

pressure to return to work soon after the baby begins to regulate herself (Lebra, 1976). Parents train babies for a life-time of self-reliance and self-structuring.

Parents expect babies to learn to express their own needs, and mothers tend to wait until babies ask for something before responding. In this way, babies are sometimes left to cry and are not soothed immediately. Since mothers and infants are physically apart for much of the time, they communicate more in the distal, verbal mode than in the proximal, tactile or non-verbal mode (Lebra, 1976). Parents encourage loud, articulate sounds from their babies.

Parents expect toddlers to meet many of their own needs and to be able to entertain themselves, even if no other children are around. These patterns are noted in the beach observations.

Caucasian-Americans are socialized to attend to individual needs, and parents remind children that "parents have needs too." It is also seen as important to regulate children's selfishness and impress upon them that they are "not the only people with wants." Parents are encouraged to interact with their young children as separate, but quasi-egalitarian partners and to use and teach them methods of negotiation which result in benefits and satisfaction for both parties (Gordon, 1976; Popkin, 1986; Reynolds, 1989).

Caucasian-Americans also believe that it is not that necessary to constantly monitor or protect the child, or to perfectly filter input to the young baby.

Hawaiian-American parents. Hawaiian-American parents acknowledge the separateness of the baby but encourage the child to remain attentive to the group and to not become self-absorbed (D'Amato, 1986; Martini & Kirkpatrick, 1992). Caregivers encourage self-reliance *and* interconnectedness. Family members learn to care for themselves, in part, out of concern for the family unit, in order not to tax the family system. Self-reliance ties them into the family, as a responsible, functioning member (D'Amato, 1986).

Babies are unconditionally loved and welcomed into the unit. They are passed around to all competent members and played with much. They stay, sleep, and bathe with others. They are carried a great deal, but as separate beings, without the physical blending observed between Japanese mothers and their babies (D'Amato, 1986; Lebra, 1976).

Infants are seen as having their own wills, and distal, verbal communication is used to regulate them. Parents encourage the development of self-help skills, and young Hawaiian children appear to be far more competent in everyday tasks than children in the other groups at the same age (D'Amato, 1986; Boggs, 1985; Jordan et al., 1982). At the same time parents teach self-reliance, they also teach basic dependence on the family unit. Children learn to fear most rejection from the family group (D'Amato, 1986).

Hawaiian parents are not overly protective. They do not see babies as fragile beings who require constant buffering from over stimulation. Consequently, babies are taken many places, and adults do not try to shape the environment to match the baby's skills and sensory tolerance.

During toddlerhood, Hawaiian parents nudge children out of the adult world and into the peer world. They discourage dependency on adults and push children to seek help and entertainment among siblings. They encourage toddlers to "do for themselves" and praise them for feeding, dressing, and bathing themselves. They encourage young children to control their emotional displays and to deal with their own peer conflicts (D'Amato, 1986).

Hawaiian parents expect obedience. They discourage children from participating in adult conversation, questioning authority, making demands, or trying to negotiate with adults (D'Amato, 1986). Children initiate few topics and have only short speaking turns in parent-child interactions (Boggs, 1985; Martini & Mistry, 1992). In the above ways, adults teach children about "separation of the generations" in the Hawaiian social world (D'Amato, 1986). This separation of the generations is also evident in the beach observations, in which both adults and children focus most on their peers.

Exploration and learning

Japanese-American. Japanese parents carefully protect children from danger, minor injury, and over stimulation. They do not expect young children to learn to protect or structure themselves. They also believe children learn best through controlled rather than random exploration, so they structure the environment to be challenging and interesting to the child, but also to be safe, non-frustrating, and mistake-proof (Hess et al., 1986; Miyake et al., 1986; Stevenson et al., 1986; Tobin, Wu & Davidson, 1989; White & LeVine, 1986). In the beach observations, Japanese-American parents continuously monitor children's actions and intervene to prevent hurt or danger. They quickly remove small, sharp, or dirty objects and limit exploration to on or near the beach mat. Alternately, they move ahead of a crawling baby, preparing the space for her. The observed parents constantly hold infants and toddlers when they are in the water rather than letting them paddle about unsupported.

Caucasian-American parents. These parents express the belief that children learn by making nondangerous mistakes (Brooks, 1991; Galinsky, 1985; Richman et al., 1988). They child-proof surroundings, but then allow wide-ranging exploration and experimentation within these areas. At the beach they allow babies to play with sticks, shells, cans, paper cups, and plastic utensils. They take these away only when children try to put them in their mouths. Similarly, they allow young children to paddle around in the water, unsupported, occasionally getting mouthfuls. They also allow babies to crawl into the ocean. Japanese-American mothers observing these practices sometimes show alarm.

Hawaiian-American parents. These parents allow wide-ranging exploration in infants and toddlers as long as these activities do not seriously endanger the child or disrupt adult activities. They curtail curiosity and noisy exploration when this disturbs other family members. In this way they encourage children to explore and experiment quietly, away from others. Hawaiian-American parents believe children learn best by watching skilled others and then performing these actions after they know how to do them (Levin et al., 1987). This contrasts with the Caucasian-American style of random, trial-and-error learning and the Japanese-American style of learning through participation in a carefully structured setting with challenges at the top of the child's skill level.

Implications

Japanese-, Caucasian-, and Hawaiian-American parents are observed interacting with their young children at the beach. Many of the hypothesized cultural tendencies are noted in these observations. Although we are all Americans, we continue to be influenced by cultural orientations, and we pass these on to our children through our micro-structuring of their lives.

Children from different cultural backgrounds in Hawaii, attend the same schools, and deal with the same kinds of authority figures and expectations of learning. They bring to school, however, different orientations toward life and learning and different views of appropriate relationships with adults and peers. These sometimes produce clashes as children and adults from different backgrounds try to act effectively and in a gratifying way in this complex milieu. Often, home and school cultures do not match, and children's learning and self-actualization suffer (Jordan et al., 1982; Levin et al., 1987; Martini & Mistry, 1992).

Children in Hawaii grow up, many intermarry, and those who remain in Hawaii usually find jobs in settings in which they work closely with people from different cultural backgrounds. Clashes in expectations, views of appropriate behavior and priorities, are everyday occurrences and topics of conversation, local humor, and pride in diversity. However, these can also cause pain and misunderstanding, and waste human resources. Therefore, we should continue to try to understand how we, as people from different cultural backgrounds, are trying to live in constructive, if, at times, different ways.

Relationship between psychological type and culture

The psychological type descriptions and the research on predominant types in different cultures are interesting, to me, as hypotheses about the cognitive preferences of people in those cultures. But the test items of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator and the type descriptions seem to be highly culturally specific, reflecting Western, middle class views of the world and the human psyche. The features described in these types seem to ring true when applied to middle-Americans, but seem disembodied, and decontextualized when applied to people from cultures I did not grow up in.

When I try to match the descriptions of types to what I know of people from other cultures, the descriptions seem "off." When reading the ESTJ description for American middle-class males, I have no trouble understanding this profile, the connections among the components, and how this type operates and unfolds in real middle-American life.

But when I read the INFP description with Japanese people in mind, the description seems hollow. A numbers of the individual components make sense, but something is missing. The description does not hang together. It appears to be a conglomeration of peripheral traits which are NOT the predominant traits of American culture. The beauty of how these features interrelate and how they structure an integrated life in a real social and physical world does not come across, and I cannot read these connections into the description, since I am unfamiliar with the culture.

As Brislin noted at the beginning of the conference, many Japanese people not only tolerate group affiliation, they love belonging to groups. They do not just tolerate group constraints for fear of going out in life alone or out of habit or upbringing, they have grown to love these connections and to see them as "freeing" rather than constraining. They understand the beauty and aesthetic value of being part of a larger whole. The group fits comfortably within their ego boundaries, and when it is missing, something of themselves is missing. Japanese people report loving, at times, feeling crowded, intertwined, and interconnected. They have developed an aesthetic appreciation for this condition. They understand the connections among the components of this constellation.

I think few Westerners really develop an understanding of the beauty of this preference. This may be why the descriptions of these types seem disjointed, as if the left-overs were thrown together. The connections between these styles and highly effective, beautifully integrated life-styles have not been made.

I spent a year on a Polynesian island, among people who lived a complex form of social affiliation. I could barely stand it. The interconnectedness and intertwining drove me crazy. I never really understood what people saw in this way of interacting. I could see and analyze the components of this lifestyle, and I could rationally understand them, but I could only get a superficial understanding of how they fit together. I never understood the beauty of it.

But I did understand that Marquesans appreciated these features and saw them as natural, beautiful, and fitting, as processes which made life meaningful. What I was lacking was a whole babyhood and toddlerhood and childhood and adolescence full of messages and moment-to-moment experiences and examples, such as the ones observed at the beach, which showed how these components fit together and how they made sense in life.

In contrast, many Westerners seem to love social disengagement. At times we even love feeling lonely. We have grown to understand the beauty of this feeling and have acquired highly positively charged associations to this sensation. Being separate from the group almost defines our being.

Moment-to-moment experiences throughout life, and particularly in formative years, clarify the meanings of particular cultural preferences and demonstrate how different preferences work together to form an organized adaptation to the particular context the person lives in. Ethnography can contribute the description of these moment-to-moment connections and meanings to the study of psychological type.

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